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SUBJECT: MONUC AT UN: WE ONLY HAVE PLEDGES FOR HALF
REQUESTED TROOPS

¶1. (SBU) SUMMARY: UN Under Secretary-General Le Roy on December 15 told the Security Council that diplomatic efforts are thawing the relationship between the DRC and Rwanda. He said direct talks between the DRC and Nkunda's CNDP stalled, but were set to resume December 17. Le Roy said he had received commitments to meet only half of total number of newly authorized troops for MONUC. The U.S. said implementation of existing agreements is the key to a lasting peace. Council members agreed that protecting civilians was MONUC's first priority. France said the EU is still discussing the possibility of sending troops. MONUC's new mandate is scheduled to be adopted December 22. END SUMMARY.

DRC/RWANDA RELATIONS IMPROVING

¶2. (SBU) UN Under Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Alain Le Roy said diplomatic efforts between the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Rwanda are improving their bilateral relationship. The foreign ministers had recently met three times, and each country planned on reopening its embassy by April 2009.

CNDP/DRC NEGOTIATIONS STALLED

¶3. (SBU) Le Roy reported Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Obasanjo said there were three problems with the ongoing talks in Nairobi between the DRC and General Nkunda's CNDP rebel group. First, the CNDP delegation had no authority to make binding commitments. Second, the CNDP was raising national issues, such as mining contracts, that the facilitators did not believe they were mandated to address. Third, there was no agreement on incorporating these talks into the Goma/Nairobi framework or on whether non-CNDP armed groups should participate. Le Roy said the talks were set to resume December 17.

PLEDGES SLOW IN COMING FOR NEW TROOPS

¶4. (SBU) Le Roy briefed the Council on the status of identifying the roughly 3,000 additional troops for MONUC authorized in Security Council Resolution 1843. He said Bangladesh offered one formed police unit and possibly one battalion of infantry, Guatemala proposed sending one Special Forces company, Jordan indicated a desire to send an unspecified number troops, and Belgium pledged a C-130 plane and intelligence assistance. Le Roy said MONUC lacked, assuming specific pledges materialized, one battalion of infantry, one Special Forces company, one formed police unit, one engineering unit, and one C-130. Overall he said 92 percent of MONUC's existing forces were deployed in eastern DRC.

MANDATE LANGUAGE-STRAIGHT FROM DPKO

¶5. (SBU) Le Roy asked for as much clarity as possible in the new MONUC resolution. He even introduced language MONUC

wanted included in the resolution in order to clarify MONUC's role in cooperating with the DRC army (FARDC), to wit: "to allow MONUC to operate with FARDC only if FARDC had sufficient command and control and operational capacity." (COMMENT: This was an unconventional step for DPKO to take-as normally DPKO works bilaterally to introduce text into a resolution. END COMMENT).

U.S. SAYS USE EXISTING AGREEMENTS

¶6. (SBU) DepPolCouns said the Nairobi Communique, the Goma Accords, and the September 2008 MONUC disengagement plan provide the framework for re-establishing security and protecting civilians. He also stressed the importance of making sure MONUC's tasks were clearly prioritized in the new mandate.

ALL MEMBERS SUPPORT PROTECTING CIVILIANS; EU STILL DISCUSSING TROOPS

¶7. (SBU) All Council members said protection of civilians needed to be MONUC's first priority. French PermRep Ripert said the European Union was still discussing the possibility of sending an interim "bridging" force to the DRC, to assist MONUC until the new UN troops arrive. Several delegations praised France's draft MONUC renewal resolution, scheduled for a December 22 adoption.

Khalilzad